DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 850 CE 046 401

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TITLE The Relationship between Career Development Factors such as Job Knowledge or Career Exploration and Self-Estimate Ability. Technical Information Paper.
INSTITUTION New South Wales Dept. of Industrial Relations, Darlinghurst (Australia).
PUB DATE Nov 85
NOTE 12p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Development; Career Education; *Career Exploration; *Cognitive Ability; Developed Nations; Educational Research; Foreign Countries; Grade 10; Occupational Information; Secondary Education; *Self Evaluation (Individuals); Student Evaluation; *Vocational Evaluation; *Vocational Interests
IDENTIFIERS *Australia (New South Wales)

ABSTRACT

The hypothesis that higher levels of job knowledge and/or more extensive career exploration would be indicated in higher correlations between self-estimates and measured interests was investigated in two separate studies. Job knowledge was assessed using the Job Knowledge Survey (JKS), and career exploration was assessed using the questionnaire, Finding Out Facts about Jobs (FOFAJ). In the first study, the JKS was administered to 77 Australian students in year 10 together with the Vocational Interest Survey, a questionnaire of vocational interests, and the Work Interest Survey, a self-rating scale of the same interests. The effect of level of consistency among interests and the relationship between vocational types and job knowledge were analyzed. Results showed that neither factor influenced job knowledge and did not support the hypothesis that job knowledge and self-estimate ability are related. In the second study, FOFAJ was administered to 101 students in year 10. The two measures used in the first study were also administered. No evidence indicated that scores on the career exploration measure were affected by students' vocational type or the consistency of their interests. Self-estimate ability was not correlated significantly with the extent of career exploration. However, differentiation among the measured interests was related to career exploration. (YLB)

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TECHNICAL INFORMATION PAPER

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER DEVELOPMENT FACTORS SUCH AS JOB KNOWLEDGE OR CAREER EXPLORATION AND SELF-ESTIMATE ABILITY

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November, 1985

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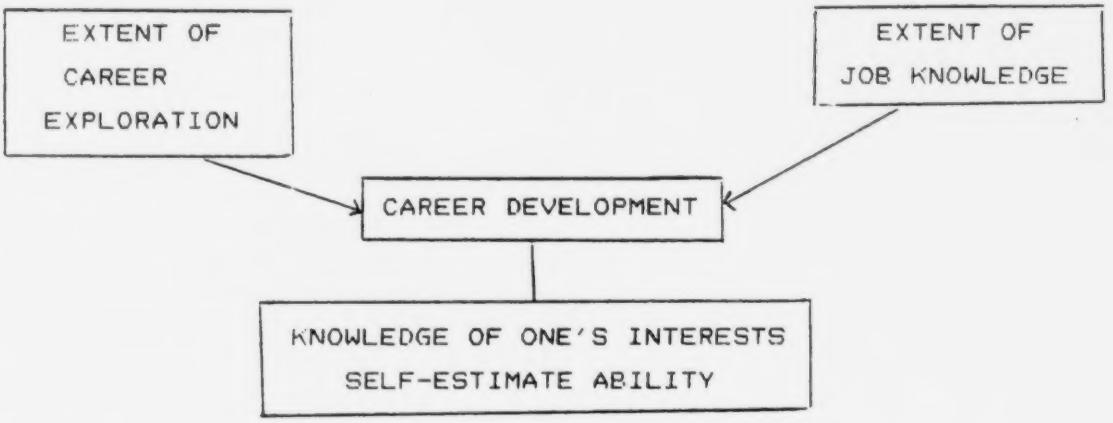
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CAREER DEVELOPMENT FACTORS SUCH AS JOB KNOWLEDGE OR CAREER EXPLORATION AND SELF-ESTIMATE ABILITY

The extent of career exploration and the amount of job knowledge that a person has available to them are considered to be important component of the ability to make a vocational choice. A number of theorists, such as Roe, Tiedeman, Super, Crites, Holland and others, have discussed the effect of these factors on career development (see Super 1955, Crites 1965). Simply put, it is assumed that the more a person knows about occupations, the more likely it is for him/her to make effective career decisions.

Nevertheless, the effect of these factors on the relationship between measured interests and self-estimates has not been investigated. In this study it was hypothesised that higher levels of job knowledge and/or more extensive career exploration would be indicated in higher correlations between self-estimates and measured interests. The relationship between these vocational constructs and self-estimate ability is indicated below:



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VOCATIONAL CONSTRUCTS AND SELF-ESTIMATE ABILITY

The effects of these factors were investigated in two separate studies. Job Knowledge was assessed using the Job Knowledge Survey-JKS (Loesch, 1978) and career exploration was assessed using the questionnaire Finding out Facts about Jobs-FOFAJ (Athanasou, 1981).

The JKS is a measure of "a specific type of cognitive ability" (Loesch 1978, p. 7) in which subjects are asked to classify 48 occupations in terms of their involvement with Data, People or Things. Normative data contained in the manual for the JKS indicated that high school students (N=360) average a total score of 59.6 (S.D.=10.4). The FOFAJ questionnaire was developed for use in Australia by the Vocational Guidance Bureau and has also been used extensively by the Department of Education in New South Wales (e.g. Career Exploration Camps, Jones 1979). This version contained a list of 30 activities from which subjects were required to indicate that they have read, written to, watched and listened, visited, and tried. Thus, it is a behavioural measure of career exploration based on what people have actually done.

STUDY 1 JOB KNOWLEDGE

METHOD AND RESULTS

The JKS was administered to 77 high school students in year 10 (average age = 15.2years S.D.=0.5) together with the Vocational Interest Survey (Athanasou, 1985b) and the Work Interest Survey (Athanasou, 1985a). The Vocational Interest Survey is a 221 item questionnaire of vocational interests developed according to Holland's (1973) model of vocational interests. The Work Interest Survey is a self-rating scale of the same interests Scores from the VIS aid WIS were correlated for each individual and that correlation was converted to Fisher Zr. This served as the dependent variable. Job knowledge scores were used as the independent variable.

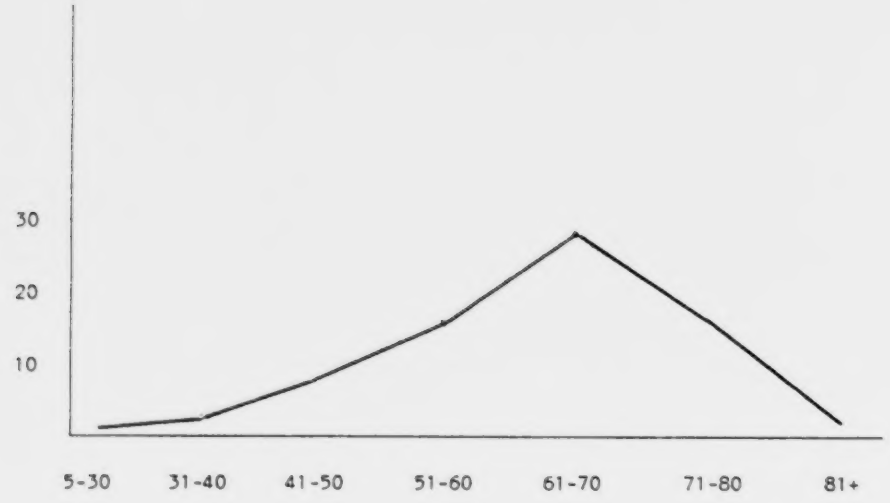


FIGURE 1 JOB-KNOWLEDGE SCORES (N=77)

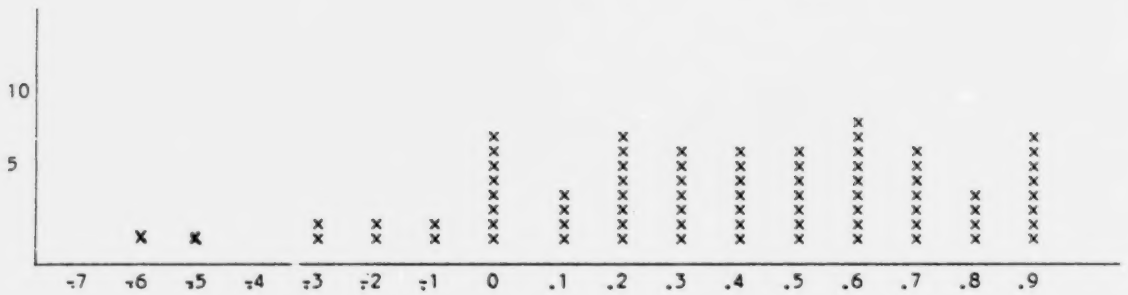


FIGURE 2 CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-ESTIMATES AND VOCATIONAL INTERESTS FOR JOB-KNOWLEDGE STUDY (N=77)

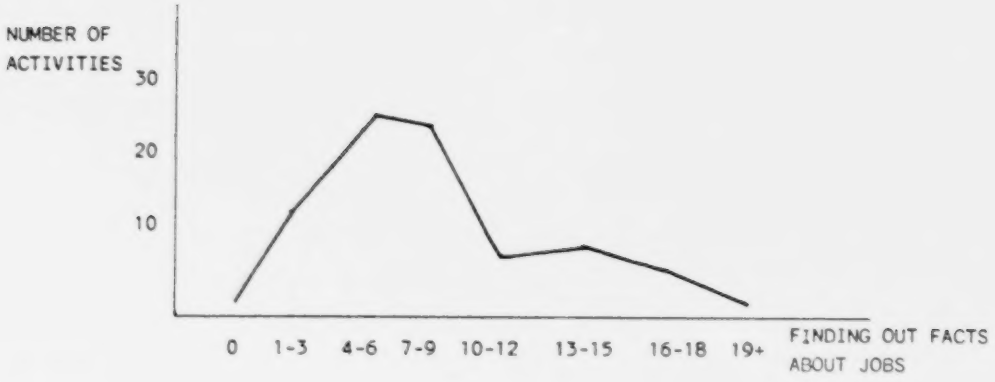
The mean score of the Australian sample on the JKS was 62.3 (S.D.=11.9) and was not significantly different from that of the sample of U.S. males ($\bar{x}$=60.4, S.D.=10.6, N=180). Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of job knowledge scores for this sample.

The effect of level of consistancy amongst interests, and the relationship between vocational types and job knowledge is indicated in Table 1. Results showed that neither factor influenced job knowledge. The distribution of the correlations between self-estimates and measured interests was positively skewed (see Figure 2). Furthermore, there was no significant correlation between the profile factors and job knowledge (Table 2). Therefore, the results do not support the hypothesis that job knowledge and self-estimate ability are related.

STUDY 2 CAREER EXPLORATION

METHOD AND RESULTS

A behavioural checklist of career exploration activities - Finding out Facts about Jobs (FOFAJ) - was administered to 101 high school students. These comprised 42 male and 59 female students in year 10, with an average age of 15.2 years. (S.D.=0.9). Subjects were also administered the questionnaire measure of interests and the self-estimate form referred to above. As in the previous study, the correlation between an individual's profile of six measured interests and their six self-estimated interests served as the dependent variable. The independent variable was the extent of career exploration.



FIGURES 3 CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES (N=101)

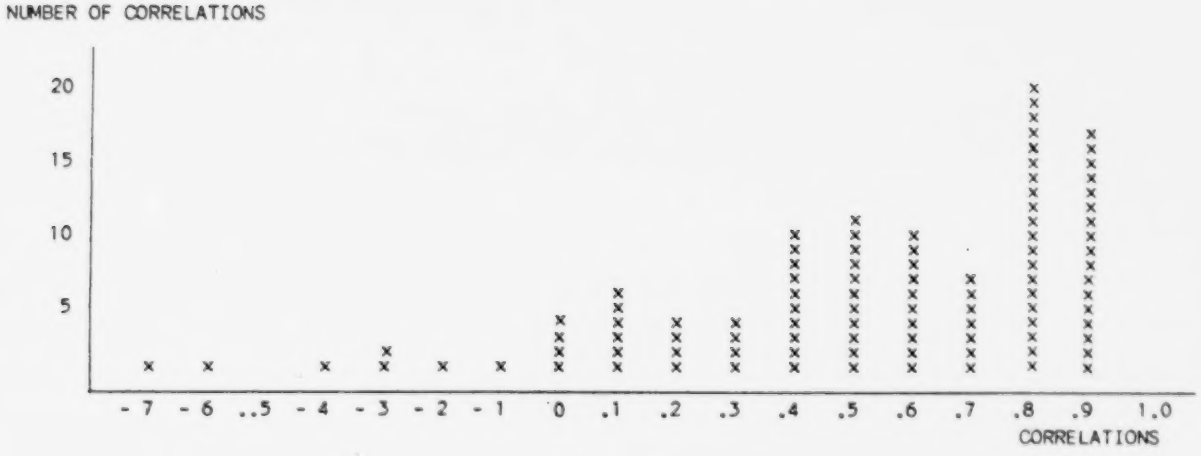


FIGURE 4 CORRELATIONS BETWEEN THE SELF-ESTIMES AND MEASURED INTEREST (N=101) - CAREER EXPLORATION STUDY

Figure 3 indicates the distribution of scores on the career exploration measure. The mean number of sampled activities undertaken by this group were 7.4 (S.D.=4.8). As in the previous study there was no evidence to indicate that scores on the career exploration measure were affected by a person's vocational type or the consistency of their interests (see Table 1).

The distribution of correlation coefficients was positively skewed and the mean individual correlation was 0.551 (see Figure 4). Self-estimate ability was not correlated significantly with the extent of career exploration (r=0.117), and other profile measures such as D2, elevation, shape, scatter were also not related significantly (Table 2). However, differentiation among the measured interests was related to career exploration (r=0.383 $p < 0.0001$). This may indicate that career exploration facilitated the development of a distinctive profile of career interests and sharpened the distinction between the highest and lowest interests.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The available evidence did not support the hypothesis that either career exploration or job knowledge were related to self-estimate ability in these two independent samples. The original rationale for this hypothesis was based on the notion that the more information we have about careers, then the more likely are to know our interests, and possibly be able to better estimate measured interests.

While more career knowledge and experience may lead to better knowledge of interests, this knowledge was not related to self-estimate ability. That is, most people were able to estimate their measured interests irrespective of whether they had a great deal of job knowledge or undertaken many career exploration activities.

Therefore it seems that self-perception of one's interests is not greatly influenced by such outside factors and self-estimate ability could be considered a personal or situational characteristic. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain the wide distribution of correlations from around -0.7 to +0.9.

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TABLE 1 VOCATIONAL TYPES, CONSISTENCY LEVELS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT MEASURES

CONSTRUCT	VARIABLE	CAREER DEVELOPMENT SCORES FOFAJ (N=101) $\bar{x}$	SD	JAKS (N=77) $\bar{x}$	SD
	Self- Estimate Type	F(6.93)=1.17 n.s		F(5.71)=0.71 n.s	
HOLLAND	R Practical	7.7	5.1	62.4	10.8
TYPE	I Scientific	8.3	5.8	58.9	19.6
	A Artistic	8.7	5.0	62.2	11.2
	S Social	4.8	2.9	59.4	10.2
	E Business	8.1	3.9	66.3	11.1
	C Clerical	6.5	3.4	65.6	10.7
	Measured Interests	F(5.94)=1.88 n.s		F(5.71)=1.8 n.s	
	R Practical	5.9	3.6	62.8	13.1
	I Scientific	9.0	5.1	68.6	8.5
	A Artistic	9.0	5.5	59.4	14.4
	S Social	8.6	5.9	65.3	10.3
	E Business	7.6	4.4	54.9	11.0
	C Clerical	5.4	2.1	66.2	9.5
CONSISTENCY	Self-Estimates	F(2.96)=0.09 n.s		F(2.74)=0.5 n.s	
AMONGST	Consistency				
INTERESTS	High	7.8	5.1	63.5	10.8
	Medium	7.3	4.2	60.1	12.7
	Low	7.3	4.8	63.1	12.6
	Measured Interests	F(2.9)=0.50 n.s		F(2.74)=2.6 n.s	
	Consistency				
	High	6.4	5.4	65.3	11.9
	Medium	7.3	4.6	64.2	11.1
	Low	7.8	4.4	58.1	12.5

TABLE 2 CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT MEASURES AND PROFILE FACTORS

CONSTRUCT	VARIABLE	CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS FOFAJ (N=101)	JAKS (N=77)
PROFILE MEASURES	Differences between the profile of self-estimate scores and the profile of measured interests in:- Elevation	0.013	-0.128
	Scatter	-0.034	-0.019
	Shape x Scatter	0.083	-0.104
	Difference (D^2)	0.031	-0.131
SELF-ESTIMATE ABILITY	Correlation between self estimates and measured interests	0.117	0.194
DIFFERENTIATION	Differentiation of self-estimates	-0.093	0.142
	Differentiation of measured interests	0.383 ($p<0.0001$)	0.182